

REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 29, 2003. Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 21, 22, 29, and 31-38 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 7, 11, 21, and 29 are in independent form. Claims 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14-20, 23-28, and 30 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein, and new Claims 31-38 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 21, 22, and 29 have been amended to define Applicants' invention more clearly. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by each of U.S. Patent No. 6,460,030 (Ludtke) and U.S. Patent No. 5,796,951 (Hamner et al.). Cancellation of Claims 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14-20, 23-28, and 30 renders their rejections moot. Applicants submit that independent Claims 1, 7, 11, 21, and 29, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

An aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to a network system that includes a server, a client, and a device. The server includes a first storage unit, which stores hierarchical position information defining a position of a device in a plurality of hierarchical layers; and a first transmission unit, which transmits the hierarchical position information stored by the first storage unit to the client via a network. The device includes a second storage unit, which stores icon data indicating an icon for the device; and a control unit, which transmits the icon data stored by the second storage unit to the client via the network.

The client includes a first reception unit, which receives the hierarchical position information transmitted by the first transmission unit via the network; a second transmission unit, which transmits a request to a device corresponding to the hierarchical position information received by the first reception unit so as to acquire the icon data stored in the second storage unit from the device via the network; a second reception unit, which receives the icon data transmitted by the control unit via the network; and a display unit, which displays the icon indicated by the icon data received by the second reception unit based on the received hierarchical position information.

One of the notable features of Claim 1 is that the client receives hierarchical position information of a device from the server and receives icon data from a device corresponding to the received hierarchical position information. The hierarchical position information defines a position of a device in a plurality of hierarchical layers. An icon corresponding to the received icon data of the device is displayed based on the received hierarchical position information. By virtue of this feature, for example, the client, which may be remotely located from the server, may be informed by the server of the hierarchical position information of a particular desired device, which also may be remotely located. The client then obtains from that device (that is, the device corresponding to the hierarchical position information) icon data indicating the device's icon, and displays the icon based on the hierarchical position information.¹

¹ The examples provided herein are intended for illustrative purposes. It should be understood that the scope of the present invention is not limited to the illustrative examples nor any details discussed therein.

Ludtke is understood to relate to a system for searching through descriptive data in a network of electronic devices, in which one of the electronic devices is a controller and one or more of the other electronic devices is a target. Apparently, Ludtke teaches that the controller transmits a command with search criterion to each target, and each target recognizes the command and performs a search. If the search criterion is identified by a target during its search, a response containing an identifier is transmitted to the controller.

Hamner et al. relates to a system for displaying information relating to devices on a network. As understood by Applicants, Hamner et al. teaches that data is gathered regarding a current configuration of the network, the types of the devices, the quantity of each type, and the tasks performable by each device. The data is stored in a database and a display is generated showing the devices in association with their tasks.

Nothing has been found in Ludtke nor in Hamner et al. that is believed to teach or suggest a network system including a server, a client, and a device, wherein the server stores "hierarchical position information defining a position of a device in a plurality of hierarchical layers" and transmits the hierarchical position information to the client via a network, wherein the device stores "icon data indicating an icon for said device" and transmits the icon data to the client via the network, and wherein the client receives the hierarchical position information transmitted from the server, transmits a request to a device corresponding to the hierarchical position information so as to acquire the icon data from the device via the network, receives the icon data from the device, and displays the icon indicated by the icon data based on the received hierarchical position information, as recited in Claim 1.

Applicants submit that neither Ludtke nor Hamner et al. disclose or suggest the features of a server transmitting to a client hierarchical position information defining a position of a device in a plurality of hierarchical layers, the client transmitting a request for icon data to the device corresponding to the hierarchical position information, the device transmitting the icon data to the client, and the client displaying an icon indicated by the icon data based on the hierarchical position information. That is, the cited references are not seen to show or suggest such communication of data. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Ludtke and Hamner et al., considered individually or in combination, and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

Independent Claims 21 and 29 include features similar to those discussed above. Additionally, Claims 7 and 11 are directed to the client and the device of Claim 1, respectively. Therefore, those claims also are believed to be patentable for at least the above reasons. Further, the other claims in the present application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

No petition to extend the time for response to the Office Action is deemed necessary for the present Amendment. If, however, such a petition is required to make this

Amendment timely filed, then this paper should be considered such a petition and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite petition fee to Deposit Account 06-1205.

CONCLUSION

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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